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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/600,860	06/20/2003	Hiroyuki Oka	FP03-001US	6408

7590 09/07/2004
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EXAMINER

HYEON, HAE M

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2839

DATE MAILED: 09/07/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/600,860

Applicant(s)

OKA, HIROYUKI

Examiner

Hae M Hyeon

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 09 August 2004.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3,4 and 7-10 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3,4 and 7-10 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 20 June 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- 1) ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - 2) ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - 3) ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 1, 4, 8, and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Saito (5,634,807).

Saito discloses a waterproof connector 23 comprising a connector housing 49 having a plurality of cavities with open rear ends for receiving terminal fittings 53 connected to ends of electric wires 31 and a rubber plug accommodation part 24; a rubber plug 71 having opposite planar front and rear surfaces, a seal lip 21, and through-holes 27; a rubber plug hold-down member 19 having a front surface and a plurality of open portions 45. In column 6, lines 59-67, Saito teaches that a waterproof rib 33 can be formed at any one of the circumferential edge portions of the opening 27 of the waterproof plug 71 or that of the sealing portion of the waterproof plug cover (rubber plug hold-down member 19). The examiner is simply listing all the elements because it is clear that Saito teaches each element having the same function as the corresponding elements recited in these claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

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(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 3 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Saito.

Claims 3 and 9 recite that the waterproof rib surrounds a region corresponding to all of the open rear ends of the cavities.

While Saito discloses the waterproof ribs 33, Saito discloses the each waterproof rib 33 surrounding each open rear end 27 of the cavities. However, the function of the waterproof rib 33 does not change whether the waterproof rib 33 surrounds a region corresponding to all of the open rear ends 27 or an individual waterproof rib 33 surrounds each open rear end 27 of the cavities.

It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to modify the rubber plug taught by Saito such that it would have a waterproof rib surround a region corresponding to all of the open rear ends as taught by the instant invention because the function of the waterproof rib does not change whether the waterproof rib surrounds a region corresponding to all of the open rear ends or an individual waterproof rib surrounds each open rear end of the cavities.

5. Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Saito in view of Gehrke et al (6,095,860).

Claim 7 recites seal lips formed on a peripheral surface of the rubber plug. While Saito discloses a seal lip 21 formed on a peripheral surface of the rubber plug 71, Saito only discloses one seal lip.

Gehrke discloses a waterproof connector comprising a rubber plug 5 having two seal lips 18 for providing good waterproof sealing in a rubber plug accommodation part of a connector housing. Furthermore, making more than one seal lip only deals with a duplication of part. It has been held that mere duplication of the essential working parts of a device involves only routine skill in the art. *St. Regis Paper Co. v. Bemis Co.*, 193 USPQ 8. Lastly, the use of a plurality of seal lips is well known in the art of an electrical connector.

It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to modify the rubber plug taught by Saito such that it would have a plurality of seal lips as taught by Gehrke to provide good waterproof sealing. Also, having a plurality of seal lips only deals with a duplication of parts.

Response to Arguments

6. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1, 3, 4 and 7-10 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

7. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after

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the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Hae M Hyeon whose telephone number is 571-272-2093. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon.-Fri. (8:30-5:30).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tulsidas C Patel can be reached on (571) 272-2098. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Hae M Hyeon
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2839

hmh

hmh

Hae Moon Hyeon